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A Preliminary Exploration on the Cohesion of China Dream in the Consensus of People of All Ranks and Classes

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Abstract

More than thirty years reform and opening up in China leads to the significant changes not only in the whole country, but also in the economic and social status of people of all ranks and classes. While China is accumulating the material and spiritual wealth, the economic and social conflicts of different ranks and classes are also piled up simultaneously. With the largest population in the world, the social problems in China are very impressive in the whole world. How China smoothly to avoid “the middle income trap”, to pass through the social transformation stage of interest diversification and culture crash, and to maintain sound development trend, require a common dream, cohesion of consensus and converging strength. The China Dream is born in such historical background, which has become the spiritual bond of cohesion in the social consensus of people of all ranks and classes, and also the behavioral direction of the people of all ranks and classes.

Key words: China Dream; Ranks and classes; Social consensus

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INTRODUCTION

More than thirty years reform and opening up in China leads to the significant changes not only in the whole country, but also in the economic and social status of people of all ranks and classes. While China is accumulating material and spiritual wealth, the economic and social conflicts of different ranks and classes are also piled up simultaneously. Professor Baker described the China’s modernization and transformation as “the compressed biscuit”, displaying the different social problems in the form of condensed history in the social transformation process, leading to the unprecedented culture conflict and culture crash, with the mixture of multiple factors such as the history and reality, tradition and modernization, local culture and western culture (Xue & Li, 2007). The diachronic contradiction of several hundred years’ developments in the capitalist countries was condensed into the synchronic contradiction of several decade years’ development in China. How China smoothly to avoid “the middle income trap”, to pass through the social transformation stage of interest diversification and culture crash, and to maintain sound development trend, require a common dream, cohesion of consensus and converging strength. The China Dream is born in such historical background, which has become the spiritual bond of cohesion in the social consensus of people of all ranks and classes, and also the behavioral direction of people of all ranks and classes.

1. THE SCIENTIFIC CONNOTATION AND GOAL ORIENTATION OF CHINA DREAM

Xi Jinping proposed the “China Dream” when he was at the exhibition of *The Road to Rejuvenation* in the year of 2012.

“Everyone has ambitions, pursuits, and individual dreams. At present, everyone is discussing the China Dream. In my opinion, to achieve the rejuvenation of Chinese nation is the greatest dream of modern China. ... I firmly believe that the goal to build a well-off society will be accomplished when the Communist Party of China (CPC) is one hundred years old, and also the goal to build a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious socialism modernized China will be achieved when the People’s Republic of China is one hundred years old. The dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will be definitely accomplished.”¹

At the speech made on the March 17th 2013, Xi Jinping made a brief illustration on the connotation of China Dream, “to realize the aim of building a well-off society in an all-round way, establishing the prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious socialism modernized China, and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is to achieve the prosperous and strong China, rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, happiness to the people.”² The scientific connotation and goal orientation of China Dream are clearly presented.

1.1 The Scientific Connotation of China Dream

1.1.1 The China Dream is the Dream of Wealthy and Strong China

The dream of prosperous and strong China is the base of China Dream. The prosperous and strong country mainly depends on the aspects of economy and the politics, including the economy, technology, military, and the politics, law and system. The concrete presentation is the prosperous national economy, open political policy, advanced technology, strong national defense, and so on. Without the prosperous country, strong national army, advanced technology and the strong national defense, the peace and happiness of people can’t be guaranteed, and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and contribution to the whole world can’t be supported either. There are essential differences between the prosperous and strong China and the understanding of western countries. The prosperous and strong China is not one of hegemony and expanding in the western countries. Though the competition for the energy and natural resources in the 21st century becomes fiercer and fiercer, China will not plunder the resources of other countries for its own interest, and will not provoke the war by making excuses, and will not forcefully split or separate other countries for

the present interests, which will lead to the unreturnable conflict and disorder of politics, culture and religion. The dream of wealthy and strong China is not to close the door to the world, and we will hear the voice of world and pay attention to the disaster of the backward countries. The dream of wealthy and strong China is closely related with not only the stability, development, prosperity, harmonious of China, but also the international peace, development, flourishing, civilization, which will achieve the harmony of politics and people, and harmony of countries at the international stage. All above is the real connotation of dream of wealthy and strong China.

1.1.2 The China Dream Is the Dream of National Revitalization

The national revitalization is the core of China Dream, mainly from the perspective of culture, spirit and the value orientation, which is the internal motive for the country to stand and reconstruct toughly with the difficult situation and challenges at home and abroad. On the one hand, the national revitalization means the conscious and confident of their own culture. The ancient China has made gigantic contribution to the culture of the whole world. Before the 16 century, 175 items of 300 great technology invention items in the world were made by Chinese, in which the agriculture, textile, metallurgy, manufacturing and other technologies of ancient China were far beyond the world level. Great contribution has been made not only in the manufacturing of instrument, technology, but also the institutional system, which is the result of the long term nourishing by the excellent Chinese culture. On the other hand, the national revitalization means the spiritual revitalization. Since the modern China, with the decline of countries economy and politics, Chinese began to feel inferior and less confident, wandering between the learning the west and worshipping everything foreign, resulting to the subjective doubt and negation on the Chinese culture, spirit and value orientation without seeking truth from facts and argumentation. Since the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the problem has been overcome to the great degree, however, at the era of urgent saving the nation from subjugation, violent revolution, restructuring the system, national construction, China failed to think rationally and comprehensively about the uplifting the spirit of China, and also failed to think about the China’s traditional culture, subjective spirit, persevering, unyielding spirit of the people, and rational pursuing the reality, which were lost and faded in the fame, benefit and hasty. The China Dream is the revitalization of Chinese culture, spirit and morality etc. in the process of building the well-off society in an all-round way and from realizing the socialism modernization.

1.1.3 The China Dream Is the Dream of People’s Happiness

The people’s happiness is the ultimate goal of the China Dream. Xi Jinping points out that “the China Dream is the

¹ *Selection of Important Documents Since the 18th CPC National Congress (First Volume)*. (2014, p.84). China Central Documents Press.

² Ibid. p.234.

national dream, and the dream of every Chinese. ...in a word, it is the dream of the people, so it has to be realized depending closely on the people, and constantly brings benefits to the people.”³ As the ruling party in China, the Communist Party of China (CPC) is leading the people to build the country well, and to let people enjoy the happiness. The China Dream of people’s happiness agrees with the aim and goal of the ruling party, in which the ruling party actively responds to the expectations of the people, and actively creates and starts the human-oriented political strategy of happiness circumstances. The sharer and the depending forces of China Dream are integrated. The personal dream and China Dream should be combined together, consciously integrating the personal dream and the family happiness with the prosperity of the country and national rejuvenation, and integrating the personal dream with the struggling for the realization of China Dream. People exist in the double of the goal and means, which is unified in the meaning of people’s happiness in the China Dream.

The prosperity of country, revitalization of nation, and the happiness to the people are in the unity of opposites. Without the prosperity of country as the base, there is no revitalization of nation and the happiness to the people. Without the revitalization of the national spirit culture, there are no real prosperity of country and the happiness to the people either. And if there is no happiness to the people, people could not “enjoy the opportunity to succeed together, the chance to realize the dream together and to enjoy the opportunity of growth and progressing together with motherland simultaneously,” and there is no continuous and powerful motivation of the prosperity of the country and the national revitalization. The three dialectical relationship is not only the logic of fate community that “the small streams run dry when the main stream is low, (individual well-being depends on collective prosperity)”, but also the development motivational mechanism that “the small streams rise when the main stream is high.” It is the gigantic national dream and the dream of the country, and also the specific colorful individual lively dream, which is main characteristic of the China Dream.

1.2 The Goal Orientation of China Dream

1.2.1 To Build China Into a Moderately Prosperous Country in a Well-rounded Way

The moderately prosperous country is beneficial to the billions of population, and all-round development in the economics, politics, culture, society and ecological civilization, and is the solid foundation to realize the socialist modernization and national rejuvenation. Facing with the obvious conflicts and problems of unbalance, incongruity and unsustainable economic development in China at present and in the future, the Eighteenth National

Congress of CPC put forward some new requirements which are more specific, clearer policy orientation and more adaptable to the willingness of people, in order to make sure the accomplishment of moderately prosperous country in 2020. The concrete requirements are presented, firstly the continuous healthy development of economics. The GDP and the average rural-urban income are the as twice as that in 2010. Secondly, the continuous expansion of the people’s democracy. The basic policy of rule by law is fully implemented, the government ruled by law constructed, the judicial public faith force continuously improved, human rights fully respected and guaranteed. Thirdly, cultural soft power obviously enhanced. The socialist core value system is deepened in the heart of people, and the culture industry is becoming the main industry of the national economy. Fourthly, the living standard of people fully improved. The basic public service is fully equalized, people’s education level and the creative talents training level obviously promoted, better employment, reduced income distribution gap, social guarantee for everyone, harmonious and stable society. Fifthly, Great progress made in the resource-saving type, environment friendly type and ecological civilization.

1.2.2 To Build the Socialism Modernization Country

Soon after the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the first generation leadership leading by Chairman Mao Zedong proposed the long-term striving goal to realize the socialism modernization country, and the original expression was the socialism industrialization. Then the Prime Minister Zhou Enlai put forward the construction of four powerful modernization socialism country, that is, the modernization of industry, agriculture, transportation and national defense. After that, the connotation was adjusted for a few times. In the government report from the late 1964 to the early 1965, it was precisely defined as the industry modernization, agriculture modernization, technology modernization, national defense modernization. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping proposed the modernization with the characteristics of China, that is, the moderately prosperous country. Then he adjusted the strategic target in the 21st century based on the reality of China, that is, the objective to be close to the level of advanced countries was changed to reach the level of moderately developed countries. The 15th and 16th national congress of CPC stressed the objective to achieve the modernization in the middle of 21st century, when the PRC is 100 years old. The 17th national congress of CPC stressed again that when the PRC is 100 years old, the average GDP of China arrives at the level of moderately developed countries, and China is becoming the prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious socialism modernization country. The 18th national congress of CPC made it clear that China will become the prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious

³ Ibid.

socialism modernization country when 100 years old, no mentioning to the level of moderately developed countries, which is another understanding and repositioning of the self-identity and the socialism modernization. There is no determined definition of the modernization, what China is looking for is the modernization which is suitable to China itself and the law of world development.

1.2.3 To Realize the Great Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation

“If you live a life of hardships, you can manage yourself alone. But if you are powerful enough, you should also take more care of the world.” The proverb shows the inherent cultural psychology and characteristics of Chinese nation. It is originated from the comprehensive thinking and world outlook of harmonious development, interrelated, interacting and compatible between Chinese nation and other nations. Even at the social stage of falling behind, being in the difficult construction, China never forgot the responsibility of the contribution to the world. In 1956, Mao Zedong said,

Since the Revolution of 1911, after about forty to fifty years, the situation of China has completely changed. And after another forty to fifty years, that is, the year of 2001, in the 21st century, the circumstance of China changed more than ever before. China will become a powerful socialism industrial country. It is what china should be, because China is a large country with 9.6 million square kilometers, and a large population with more than millions of people. China should make larger contribution to the humans in the world. The contribution is too little for a long time in the past, which make us feel ashamed.⁴

The consciousness to contribute the whole world is passed from generation to generation, never stopping from the past to the socialism nowadays. “The China Dream we are going to achieve, will bring benefits not only to the Chinese, but also to the people of the whole world.”⁵ The famous British philosopher Bacon, Russell and historian Toynbee, the expert on scientific technology history Joseph and other people of insight all speak highly of the Chinese spirit and value orientation of peace loving and the contribution to the world. As a result, to correct understand the deep meaning of the rejuvenation of Chinese nation should be based on the orientation of Chinese traditional culture and the core value of Chinese socialism, or it will be misunderstood and twisted. The China Dream of national rejuvenation, undoubtedly will create the unprecedented prosperity of Chinese nation, but the prosperity grows with the foundation of modernization and it is the scientific harmonious development to keep the world in view, and follow the world trend. The China Dream will not restore the position of central bureau of the world, the tribute system, and the great territory in

the prosperous old China. In the hundreds of history, the territory and land has changed a lot. If disobeying the general international law and regulations, the territory and land changes with the power of the country, which will lead to the disorder of world, confliction of nations, religious disputes, resulting to the vagrant life of the people.

2. CHINA DREAM IS THE SHARED DREAM OF THE PEOPLE OF ALL RANKS AND CLASSES

The China Dream is not the dream in the general sense, and it is the shared ideal goal based on the collective consciousness of Chinese nation, the unity of collectivism, common value orientation and shared dream of the people.

2.1 China Dream Has the Basic Content Quality for the Shared Dream of the People of All Ranks and Classes

Nowadays, with the economic globalization, cultural diversity, diversified social interests, facing with the increasingly complex international situation and tough strenuous domestic situation, what is to arouse the enlightenment of the people, stimulate the vitality, and to cohere the forces? This is the China Dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. More than five thousand years of culture development, Chinese nation has made impressive contribution to the progress of the human culture. However, after the opium war, indulged in the invasion of the foreign countries for hundred of years and civil war, the people of China suffered the huge disaster and pain a lot. Sharp contrast is created between the glorious old history and the humiliation in the modern times, causing the rejuvenation of Chinese nation become the common aspiration of Chinese. The China Dream has profound historical deposit, abundant thoughts and powerful moving forces, yelling out the echoes of heart for the people of all ranks and levels, having the largest consensus, able to cohere the largest power. “The dream, cohering the will of a few generations of Chinese, represents the overall interests of the whole Chinese nation and Chinese, and the common expectation of every Chinese.”⁶ The China Dream has the basic content quality of shared dream for the people of all ranks and classes not only from the historical dimension, but also from the connotation of prosperity of country, revitalization of nation, happiness to the people and the “two-hundred-year” objective, the dreams of every rank and class all included. The China Dream has not only the profound historical accumulation to become the collective consciousness of Chinese nation, but also the

⁴ *Mao Zedong Collected Works (Seventh Volume)*. (1999, pp.156-157). Beijing, People Press

⁵ *Selection of Important Documents Since the 18th CPC National Congress (First Volume)*. (2014, p.261). China Central Documents Press.

⁶ *Ibid.* p.84.

realistic interpretation power and the age adapting power to become the shared dream and value orientation for the people of all ranks and classes.

2.2 The China Dream Is the Culture Symbol to be Easily Accepted by the People of All Ranks and Classes

The China Dream is the popular expression of a profound political theory, a kind of image to be easily accepted by the people, and a culture symbol to be easily spread among the people of different ranks and classes. In view of the connotation and the goal of China Dream, it is the greatest common agreement of Chinese nation. The social consensus is always the minimum limit agreement for the people in the society. On the one hand, the social consensus is deep in the appeal of education, medicine treatment, housing, pension system, income distribution, food security, household register system and etc.. On the other hand, the social consensus covers the collective thought of Chinese nation, the common understanding and the profound value orientation of the people for all ranks and classes. The social consensus is closely related to the common dream, moral judgment, value orientation, even they are identical. The China Dream is united with the folk consciousness and politic consciousness, social consciousness and politic consciousness, fully indicating the symbol meaning of popular expression for the China Dream, and reflecting the common wishes and appeal for the people of all ranks and classes. The inner culture, value, ethics meaning of China Dream are united with the out symbol meaning, which is the theoretical evidence and theory support of cultural symbol understood and spread by the Chinese of all ranks and classes. As a result, we will not claim the broken consensus of society, lost shared dream, just based on the surface phenomenon at present. On the contrary, we can get the expectation and dream from the laborer and builder, capture the real signal, potential power and enthusiasm from the emotional releasing and contradiction, to make the China Dream become the goal of dream, value orientation and culture symbol to promote the social consensus, enhance the culture power and strengthen the Chinese national cohesive power in the process of spreading.

3. THE CHINA DREAM COHERES THE THOUGHTS OF CONSENSUS FOR THE PEOPLE OF ALL RANKS AND CLASSES

In view of the English words, social consensus is the common agreement of the whole society. Combines with the materialist dialectics, the common means the approximately same, that is, the unification of diversities analyzed in “The Capital” by Karl Marx. In the context of China, the social consensus is the common

consciousness of the social group and the individual, which mainly expresses the dream and faith, ethic idea and the value judge of the social group and individual, and it is the necessary condition to maintain the peace and order, guarantee the harmonious development of society. The China Dream is the common goal based on the collectivism of Chinese nation, and the unity of collectivism and common dream. As a result, China Dream has the potential quality to become the common dream and social consensus of the people for all ranks and classes. At the same time, because it is a popular expression of profound political theory, easy to be understood, lively and vivid and strong touching power, which can be accepted by the people of all ranks and classes. How to turn the potential into the reality needs the practice and effort.

3.1 The China Dream Arouses the Common Consciousness of People of All Ranks and Classes

In the class society, the economic social interests of each class lead to the separating, contradiction, and conflict in the thought and consciousness. Each class has their own special faith, ethic idea, and value judge. Each class is in the same social form or economic society position, “because of the same historical background, definitely there are some similarities” (Marx & Engels, 2009, p.99). Marx connected the social consensus with the social economic interests of each class, emphasizing that the social economic benefits of each class is the basic cause of formation and splitting of social consensus, providing the solid foundation of correct route and revolutionary weapons for the proletarian revolution. And the other limit in the field of consciousness, psychology, morality, and value to discuss the social consensus, the effectiveness of practice is in a great discount. Furthermore, at the stage of sharp contradiction of classes, the social consensus in the classes is expanded as possible, and the conflict between the ruling and the ruled is amplified, so as to provide the public opinion and reality of powerful forces for the victory of class struggle. While at the stage of no conflict of classes, the commonness of benefits of each class is pursued as possible. Through the media of language and symbol, communication, exchanging, spreading and other channels, the social consensus is cohered, to realize the joint construction of environment, improved life, and long-term stability. It is not only purposeful, but also scientific and feasible. If the reality is neglected, strategic tactics wrongly adopted, revisionism will appear, or radicalism, even goes to the opposition of history, finally unable to arouse the common consciousness of each social class.

Nowadays, in China there are three classes and a couple of ranks. They are the industrial workers, specialized technical personnel, government cadre, general civil servants, enterprise leader cadre, leader cadre

of public service unit, general officials in the enterprises; farmers, migrant workers; capitalist from the HK, Macao and Taiwan, foreign capitalist, private enterprise owners (Chen, 2011, p.8). Under the background of public-owned economy as the main body and the diversified ownership economy coexisting together, because of different positions of the different ranks and classes, different interests and different perspectives, they have different points of view. At the same time, if based on the multiple diverse interests, freedom is empty talked and is complex involved with each other, on the surface it seems lively flourishing and in fact there is continuous internal exhaustion and useless. As a result, the China dream should be directed and guided in the variety and diversification to obtain the social consensus. That is, in the pattern of economic globalization and informatization of science and technology, diverse and varied interests, the China Dream, as the national dream, should be used to arouse the unified will and common consciousness of all ranks and classes, to make everyone understand the purpose, with the same goal, fighting toward the same objective, constant and perseverant, never stopping, consistent efforts and striving unremittingly. The courage to face the challenges of the social ranks and classes and the rationality to form the common will, is the first step for the China dream to avoid the turmoil, and to have continuous development and live and work in peace and contentment.

3.2 China Dream to Encourage the Spirit of All Social Ranks and Levels

If the social ranks and classes are in solidification, with the hard working the people can't change their social economic status, improve their social classes, and win the social economical interests of their expectation and dream, and then the positive upward spirit will be blocked. Once it becomes the ordinary state, the society can't last long, the ruling class pattern will change, and the stable developing situation will be suspended. At the background of the solidification of ranks and classes, the fairness and justice are shortage in the economic politic action even the policy and system. Unfair and unjust interests distribution, will lead to the felling of unfairness, being exploited, then turn to the social complaint, dissatisfaction to the society. Once it is fused, violent social conflict will happen. The Nobel economics prize winner, the Indian Amartya Sen said, "The inequality and social revolt are closely related, and their relationship is bi-directional. When the society revolt happens, the inequality feeling is easily felt and obvious." (Amartya, 2006, P.3) Unfairness and injustice not only pile up the complaint and dissatisfaction of the lower ranks and classes, but also influence the unity and cooperation of middle, higher ranks and classes. As a result, as common consciousness and dream, the China Dream must be used to encourage the hard-working spirit of the people of all ranks and classes, to push and

stimulate the construction of more fair, just system and more feasible system and mechanism.

To encourage the spirit of all ranks and classes, the confidence, faith, trust, belief for the future of country and nation, individual happiness must be restored. More than 30 years reform and opening up, China keeps about 10% economic increasing speed, and the resident income of the urban and the rural increases by 30 times, the basic social security system completed only in ten years in China while completed in tens of years in some western countries. China has become the world's second-largest importer, the largest new emerging markets to trade, and more than 20% contribution rate to the world economic growth, contributing to more than 70% of the global poverty reduction in less than 20 years (Cai, 2012). China has become the world's second largest economy, has created the "Chinese miracle" arousing attention of the world, and improved the position of the Chinese nation, the fate of the Chinese people. Based on the reality, if the Chinese work together, cooperate with each other, devote to their duties, then the social fairness and justice, stable work, satisfied income, food security, excellent education, comfortable living condition, beautiful environment and other beautiful wishes desired by the ranks and classes will be achieved.

3.3 The China Dream Directs the Practice of the Social Ranks and Classes

If the China Dream is used only at the level to awake the common consciousness of all ranks and classes and to inspire the spirit, the social consensus cannot be reached. While the Chairman Xi Jinping put forward the China Dream, he made a special warning that "practical work can make a nation prosper, while empty talks lead a nation astray." As a result, the China Dream coheres the social consensus of the all ranks and classes, on the condition of the practice as the foundation, with reform and innovation, creating wealth and the sustainable development, in order to realize the China Dream and the formation of social consensus. In practice, the most important consensus is to keep the China special road for the social ranks and classes to fulfill. On the March 23rd, 2013, Xi Jinping made an important speech at the Moscow International Relationship University, in which he pointed that, "He who wears them knows whether the shoes are suitable or not." Whether the development road is suitable or not, only can the people of the country have the voice."⁷ It expresses the respect of the countries of the world to choose their own developing road, and the profound understanding of the historical experiences and lessons of China. The socialist road with Chinese characteristics is the correct choice for the people of

⁷ *Selection of Important Documents Since the 18th CPC National Congress (First Volume)*. (2014, p.260). China Central Documents Press.

China in history, and the bright and promising road to the great rejuvenation and revival of Chinese nation of China Dream. The 18th CPC National Congress pointed out that taking the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics means we must, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and basing ourselves on China's realities, take economic development as the central task and adhere to the Four Cardinal Principles and the policy of reform and opening up. It means we must release and develop the productive forces, develop the socialist market economy, socialist democracy, an advanced socialist culture and a harmonious socialist society, and promote socialist ecological progress. It also means we must promote well-rounded development of the person, achieve prosperity for all over time, and make China a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious.⁸

The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics has gone through difficult stages, which is formed in the great practice of more than thirty years reform and opening up, and more than 60 years continuous exploration since the founding of the People's Republic of China. And it is concluded from more than 170 years of modern history of development processes in China, and inherited from the more than 5,000 years of Chinese history, so it has profound historic origin and extensive realistic foundation.⁹

The China Dream directs the behavior of all the social ranks and classes and the individual colorful rich innovation and practice in the premise of adhering to the socialist road with Chinese characteristics, which is crucial to the coherence of China dream to the people of all ranks and classes.

CONCLUSION

The China Dream is used to awake the common consciousness of all the social ranks and classes, to inspire the spirit of the social ranks and classes, to direct the behavior of all the social ranks and classes, in order to cohere the consciousness of the different social ranks and classes, to pool the strength of all the social ranks and classes, mainly from the perspective of the spiritual level. In fact, in view of the spiritual level, using the China Dream to rally the social consensus of social ranks and classes also require the coordination and cooperation from the perspective of morality, value judge, rigid law, system and the policy. As a result, the coherence of China Dream in the social consensus of all ranks and classes is a gigantic task both in theory and in practice, requiring the continuous research and effort.

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⁸ Ibid. pp.9-10.

⁹ Ibid. p.234.